

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

INR-09 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 SS-14 NSC-10 L-03 RSR-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4071

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION BERLIN

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: ETRN, GW, WB

SUBJ: CIVAIR: BERLIN/ SAARBRUECKEN SERVICE

REF: BONN 2912

1. SUMMARY: PAA HAS NOW SUBMITTED A TENTATIVE PROPOSAL FOR A BERLIN/ SAARBRUECKEN CONNECTING SERVICE IN CONJUNCTION WITH TWO FRG DOMESTIC AIRLINES. PAA HAS ENCOUNTERED DIFFICULTIES IN COM-

PLETING THESE ARRANGMENTS AND THE SAARBRUECKEN GOVERNMENT HAS EXPRESSED ITS PREFERENCE FOR MODERN AIR TRANSPORT' S (MAT) PROPOSAL OF A DIRECT SERVICE. ON BALANCE, WE BELIEVE MAT' S APPLICATION MERITS OUR SUPPORT AND WOULD PROPOSE TO SEEK ALLIED APPROVAL. HOWEVER, GIVEN OUR EXPERIENCE IN 1971, WE ARE NOT OPTIMISTIC THAT BRITISH AND FRENCH CONCURRENCE CAN BE OBTAINED. ACTION REQUESTED. DEPT' S VIEWS REQUESTED RE TABLING OF MAT' S APPLICATION FOR CAA CONSIDERATION. END SUMMARY.

2. PAA HAS GIVEN THE EMBASSY A TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF ITS PROPOSED CONNECTING SERVICE TO SAARBRUECKEN. THE INTER- LINE ARRANGEMENT PROVIDES FOR AN EARLY MORNING SERVICE IN BOTH DIRECTIONS VIA FRANKFURT USING CIMBER AIR (OPERATING ON BEHALF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF LUFTHANSA). THE SCHEDULE ALSO INCLUDES A LATER MORNING CONNECTION TO BERLIN BYA COLOGNE. AFTERNOON RETURN FLIGHTS FROM BERLIN ARE SCHEDULED THROUGH FRANKFURT AND COLOGNE IN CONJUNCTION WITH GENERAL AIR (ALSO UNDER LUFTHANSA AUSPICES) BUT WOULD REQUIRE DEPARTING BERLIN IN ALL CASES BEFORE 1600.

3. PAA'S PRESENTATION ALSO POINTS OUT: (A) CIMBER AIR IS LIKELY TO WITHDRAW BUT WOULD BE REPLACED BY GENERAL AIR; (B) IN ADDITION TO FRANKFURT AND COLOGNE, GENERAL AIR WOULD PROVIDE SAARBRUECKEN WITH SERVICES TO MUNICH AND DUSSELDORF; (C) GENERAL AIR PARTICIPATION IN THESE SAARBURECKEN SERVICES IS CONTINGENT ON THE ABSENCE OF A BERLIN/ SAARBRUECKEN ROUTE AS PROPOSED BY MAT. ADDITIONALLY, PAA INDICATES THAT IT HAS REQUESTED AN EXTENTION OF THE SUBSIDY TO THE PROPOSED SERVICE. (PAA DIRECTOR RUNNETTE HAS ASSURED US THAT PAA WOULD MAINTAIN THE FARE AT THE SAME LEVEL AS IS AT PRESENT WHATEVER THE OUTCOME OF THE SUBSIDY REQUEST).

4. THE SAARBRUECKEN GOVERNMENT WARNED US SEVERAL DAYS AGO THAT PAA HAD NOT YET SUCCEEDED IN WORKING OUT THE PROPOSED ARRANGEMENT WITH CIMBER AND GENERAL AIR, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS THE EARLY MORNING SERVICES FROM SAARBRUECKEN. CITY OFFICIALS HAVE NOW WRITTEN US IN SUPPORT OF MODERN AIR TRANSPORT'S (MAT) APPLICATION TO INTRODUCE A DIRECT BERLIN SERVICE. IN A CONVERSATION TODAY, RUNNETTE CONFIRMED THAT HE WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY IN MARSHALLING THE CONNECTING SERVICES BUT HE REMAINED HOPEFUL THAT PAA COULD ARRANGE SOMETHING BY APRIL 1.

5. WITH RESPECT TO MAT'S APPLICATION, WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED DURING A RECENT DISCUSSION THAT THE AIRLINE WOULD GIVE ITS SAARBRUECKEN SERVICE TOP PRIORITY EVEN TO THE EXTENT OF DELAYING A CHARTER COMMITMENT SHOULD THE NECESSITY ARISE. MAT HAS INDICATED, HOWEVER, THAT IT WOULD BE UNABLE TO ALTER ITS PROPOSAL IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A MORE CONVENIENT FLIGHT SCHEDULE. (PARAS 2 AND 3 REFTEL).

6. COMMENT: ON BALANCE, IT APPEARS TO US THAT MAT'S PROPOSAL IS THE MORE DESIRABLE OF THE TWO ALTERNATIVES FROM THE TRAVELING PUBLIC'S STANDPOINT. GIVEN THE SAARBRUECKEN GOVERNMENT'S PREFERENCE AND THE SHORT TIME REMAINING BEFORE PAA ELIMINATES ITS EXISTING SERVICE, WE WOULD BE INCLINED TO TABLE MAT'S APPLICATION WITH A POSITIVE U. S. RECOMMENDATION AT A CAA MEETING WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. WE EXPECT A STRONGLY NEGATIVE BRITISH REACTION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND ARE NOT OPTIMISTIC RE OUR CHANCES OF OBTAINING ALLIED APPROVAL. NONETHELESS, WE BELIEVE THE CIRCUMSTANCES WARRANT OUR SUPPORT OF MAT'S PROPOSAL. WE WILL, OF COURSE, ENCOURAGE PAA TO CONTINUE

ITS ATTEMPT AT ARRANGING A VIABLE CONNECTING SERVICE. ACTION
REQUESTED: THE DEPARTMENT' S VIEWS RE OUR SUPPORT OF MAT' S AP-
PLICATION WOULD BE APPRECIATED. HILLENBRAND

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